

# History of Sarod <sup>सरोद</sup>



**Sarkar Niyamatullah Khan**

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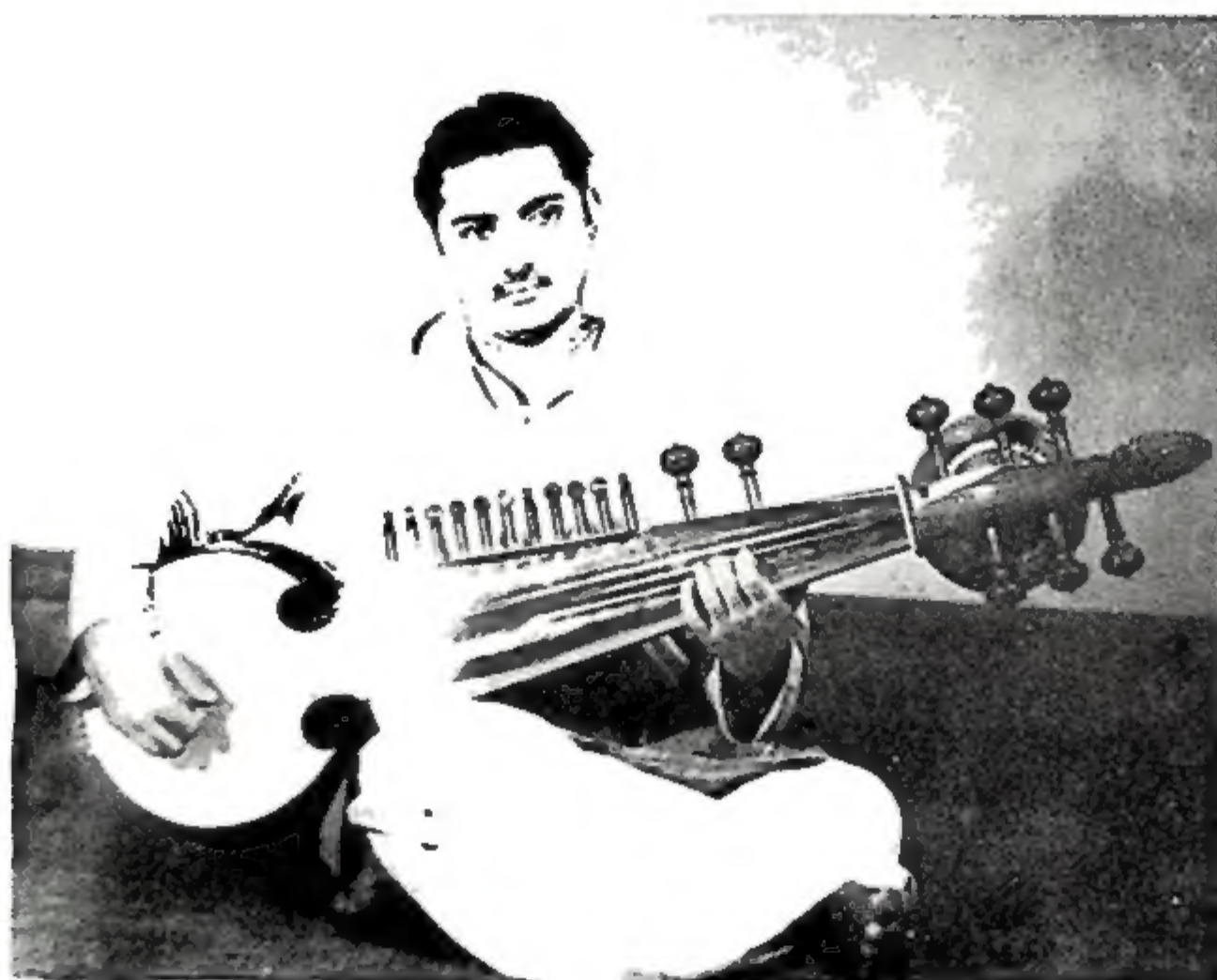
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**Ustad Karamatullah Khan**



**Ustad Asadullah Kaukab Khan**



**Ustad Ishtiaq Ahmed Khan**



## **HISTORY OF SAROD AND ITS ORIGINATOR**

Sarod and Rabab, the two different instruments are centuries old. Sarod was discovered in Greece by Phiza Gauris who was a philosopher and a spiritual leader. Rabab players called themselves as Meerzade but actually they were Mosikar Mirasis. Some people are under the impression that Sarod is a modified form of Rabab but it is not so. Sarod was in existence even before Rabab and was played in the battlefields along with drums and Nagadas. Whereas Rabab was played either by Sufi Fakirs or Mirasis of Afghanistan. There has been no change in the form of Rabab which existed even two hundred years ago. It is a fact that Sarod was brought to India when ~~Shah Jahan~~ Khan along with his troops came to India and stayed in Shajahanpur. All the Sarodists who accompanied his troops settled in Shajahanpur. Even today there is a famous bungalow by the name of "SARODIYON KA BANGLA" in Shajahanpur. Afterwards a number of Sarod Gharanas came into being from cities like Lucknow, Riyasat Dholpur, Jalalabad, Distt. Bulandshahar, Kasba Bagrasi etc.

Amongst others Rajab Khan was a famous Sarod player who also happened to be the Father-in-Law of the legendary Sarod player Sarkar Niyamatullah Khan. Sarkar Niyamatullah Khan used to trade horses and elephants for Arabs from India. His Father-in-Law Rajab Khan once told him "How can a trader of horses understand and appreciate music when he is always immersed in the stench and odour of horses." These words changed the entire life of Niyamatullah Khan. He took it as a challenge and vowed that he would return home only after achieving his goal of becoming a famous musician. He joined the court of Nawab Wajid Ali Khan and became a disciple of Basat Khan who was a grandson of Tansen. Niyamatullah Khan offered one lakh silver coins to his Guru and started learning Hindustani Ragas. He was an ardent and devoted disciple. During his training he took his guru's permission to alter the design of Sarod because it was not possible to do "Soot" and "Mend" work on Sarod.



His Guru Basat Khan gave him permission to change the existing form of Sarod. Niyamatullah Khan took his Sarod to an ironsmith and asked him to change the centre wooden main body and put iron plate in its place. Besides he got iron, brass and bronze strings attached to his Sarod. This fully changed the sound and lent depth to music. He practiced intensely on new Sarod. His Guru was greatly pleased and asked Niyamatullah Khan to play Sarod in a function organised in the court of Wajid Ali Shah. Nawab was extremely impressed by his Sarod playing and conferred upon him the title of 'Sarkar'.

The fact remains that Sarod in its present form is the great Contribution of Sarkar Niyamatullah Khan. Maharaja of Nepal became the deciple of sarkar Niyamatullah Khan and brought him to Nepal. Niyamatullah Khan got married twice and he had two sons. 'Karamatullah Khan & Asadullah Khan (Kokab)'

Karamatullah Khan and Asadullah Khan (Kokab) both played Sarod and accompanied Pt. Moti Lal Nehru to Paris (1900). Karamatullah Khan played Sarod brilliantly and made a niche for himself in the world of music. Asadullah Khan created an instrument for himself which is known as KAUKAB BANJO. Karamatullah Khan had a son named ISHTIAQ AHMED KHAN who was an All India Radio Artist in Delhi and was a very famous Sarod player. He has two sons named Mukhtar Ahmed and Gulfam Ahmed. Elder son Mukhtar Ahmed was an All India Radio Artist at Patna. He expired in 1994. At present, the younger son Gulfam Ahmed is carring on the great tradition of Lucknow Gharana of Sarod.



**Ustad Mukhtar Ahmed Khan**



**Gulfam Ahmed Khan**



## **GULFAM AHMED**

Born on 13th June, 1956, Gulfam Ahmed is a renowned Sarod player. He hails from LUCKNOW GHARANA which has a long tradition of Sarod playing. He represents the 7th Peedee. Saheb GUL KHAN, HAQDAD KHAN, NIYAMATULLAH KHAN, KARAMATULLAH KHAN (Grandfather), KOKAB KHAN, ISHTIAQ AHMED (Father) are the legendary names of this Gharana.

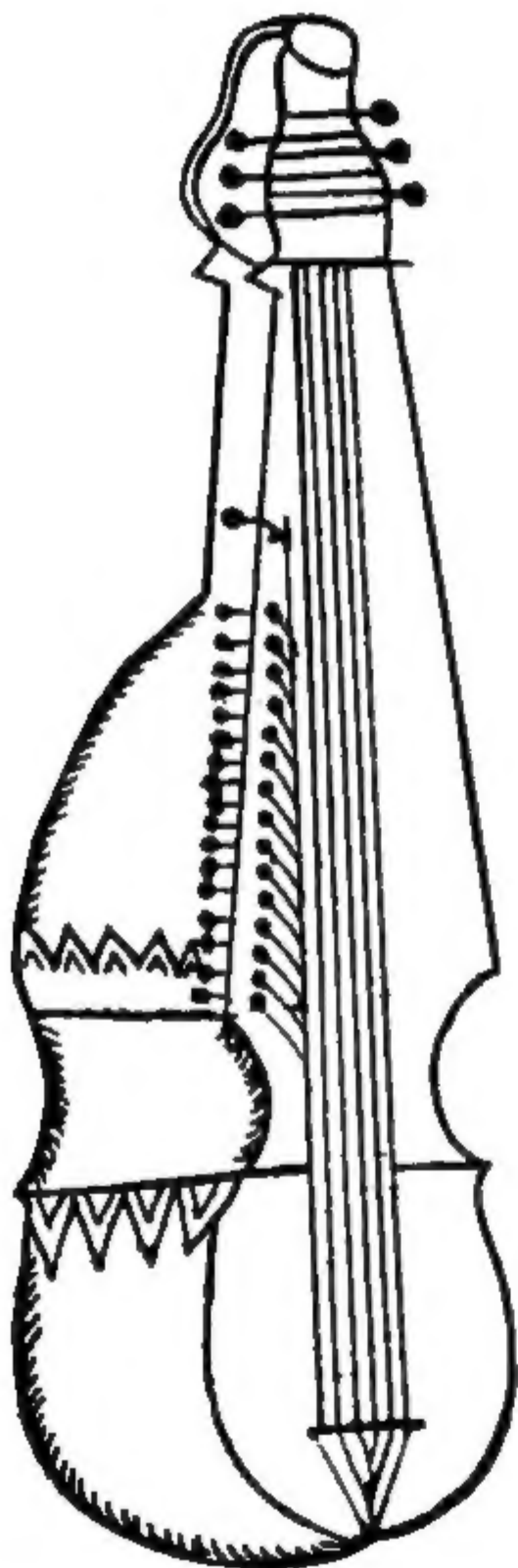
LUCKNOW GHARANA is famous for playing Sarod in Vadyatantra & Dhrupad style and excels in Gat and Layakari.

GULFAM started playing Rabab at the age of seven and received his initial training in Sarod from his father USTAD ISHTIAQ AHMED, elder brother MUKHTAR AHMED and his uncle USTAD ILLIAS KHAN.

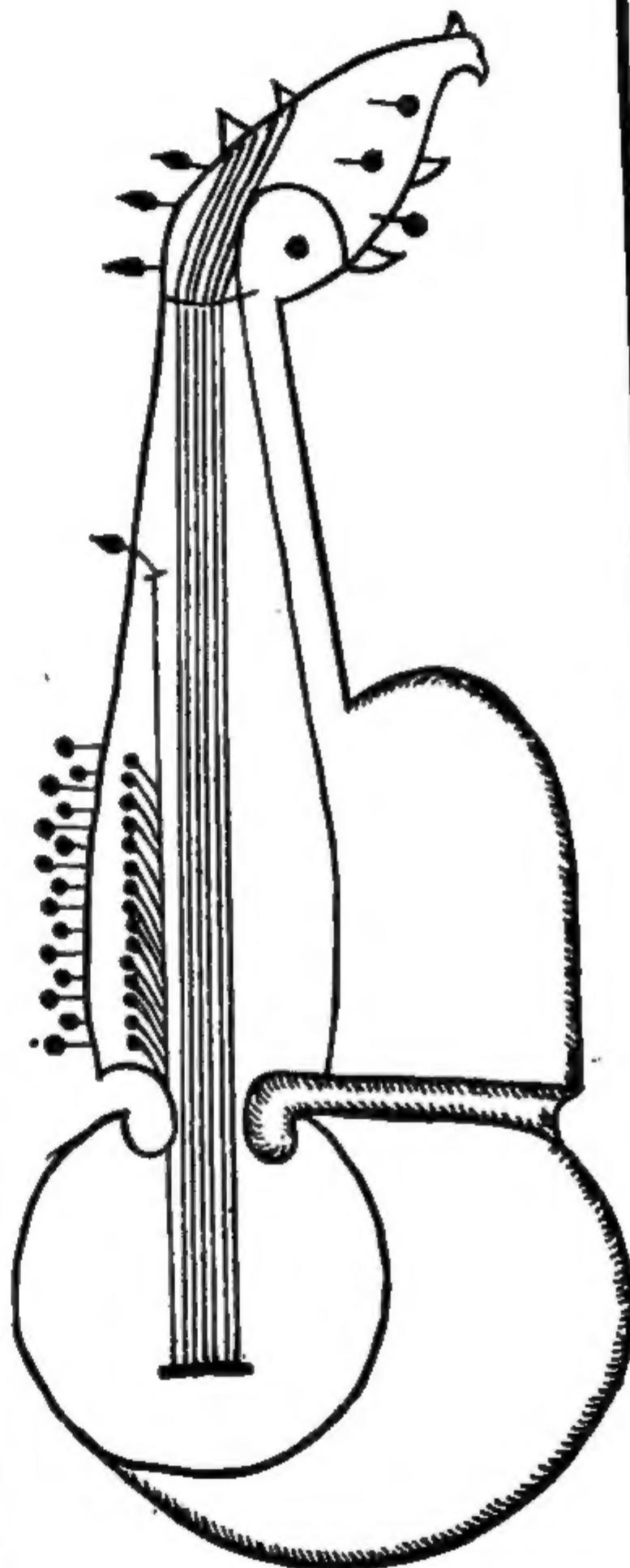
GULFAM AHMED gave his first public performance at the age of 12 and has since then captured the hearts of millions in India and abroad. His distinguished style of Sarod playing is a unique combination of Shringar and Veer Ras which takes listeners to blissful and sublime heights. He is a very emotional artist. His magic fingers move slow and fast producing variation of sound and quality matching the melody and rhythm.

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**First Form of Sarod**



**Second Form of Sarod**



## GENEALOGICAL TABLE

### SHAJAHANPUR GHARANA

Najaf Ali Khan (Sarod)  
(1705-1760)

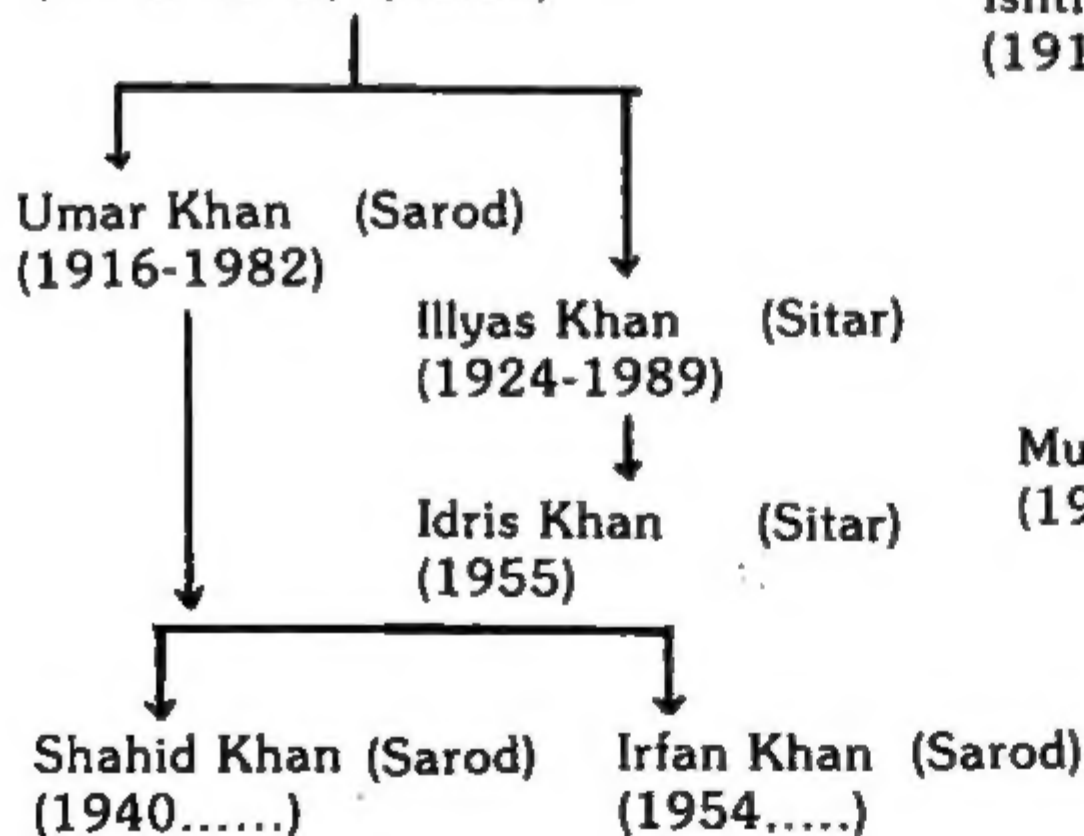
Khaler Khan (Sarod)  
(1730-1789)

Hasan Ali Khan (Sarod)  
(1752-1809)

Enayet Ali Khan (Sarod)  
(1790-1883)

Shafat Khan (Sarod)  
(1838-1915)

Sakhawat Hussain Khan  
Married to the daughter  
of Asadullah Khan Kaukab.  
(1875-1955) (Sarod)



### LUCKNOW GHARANA

Madar Khan (Sarod)  
(1704-1752)

Khan Sahib Gul Khan (Sarod)  
(1728-1779)

Haqdad Khan (Sarod)  
(1765-1836)

Niyamatullah Khan (Sarod)  
(1809-1902)

Karamatullah Khan (Sarod)  
(1848-1933)

Asadullah Khan Kaukab (Sarod)  
(1852-1919)

Ishtiaque Khan (Sarod)  
(1919-1967)

Waliullah Khan (Sitar)  
(1890-1951)

Mukhtar Ahmed  
(1941-1994)

Gulfam Ahmed  
(1954.....)

*IMRAN - KHAN  
1979) SAROD*